

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ABU DH 00693 021033Z

44

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /055 W

----- 068131

R 020945Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2673

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY SANAA

E/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 1239

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0693

BEIRUT FOR BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, TC

SUBJ: REACTION TO KING FAISAL'S ASSASSINATION

1. IN SEPARATE MEETINGS I HAVE HAD WITH SHAIKH ZAYID AND SHAIKH RASHID LAST FEW DAYS, BOTH SEEMED REASONABLY SANGUINE ABOUT FUTURE IN SAUDI ARABIA. OF THE TWO, SHAIKH ZAYID WAS MOST AFFECTED BY KING'S DEATH. SINCE LAST SUMMER HE HAD BUILT UP PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP OF SOME WARMTH WITH KING AND IS UNDOUBTEDLY SORRY TO SEE THIS POLITICAL ASSET WIPED OUT IN ONE BLOW BY ASSASSIN'S BULLET. WHILE HE EXPRESSED WARM REGARDS FOR THEM, HE MAY WONDER IF HE IS ON SAME FOOTING WITH YOUNGER BROTHERS WHO ARE NOW TAKING OVE R.

2. ZAYID EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT THAT NEPHEW FAISAL HAD UNIMPEDED ACCESS TO KING GIVEN FACT THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY THREATENED KING'S

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ABU DH 00693 021033Z

LIFE, AND THAT "MADNESS" RAN THROUGH THAT WHOLE BRANCH OF FAMILY.

3. SHAIKH ZAYID SAID KING FAISAL HAD BEEN "STRONG" AND "JUST" RULER. HE DESCRIBED KHALED AS HAVING "GOOD CHARACTER" BUT HE ASSUMED THAT POWER WOULD BE WIELDED BY FAHD AND SULTAN BEHIND THE SCENES. ZAYID SAID THIS WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT AS GOOD ARRANGEMENT AS HAVING STRONG KING WITH ALL THE REINS IN HIS OWN HANDS, BUT HE WAS NEVERTHELESS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SITUATION IN SAUDI ARABIA BECAUSE PRINCES TAKING OVER HERE WERE BOTH CAPABLE AND SENSIBLE. ONLY MEMBER OF ROYAL FAMILY HE EXPRESSED RESERVATION ABOUT WAS AMIR ABDULLAH. ZAYID SAID MERELY THAT HE DID NOT LIKE HIS LOOKS, WITHOUT BEING MORE SPECIFIC.

4. LATER IN CONVERSATION SHAIKH ZAYID EXPRESSED A FEW CRITICISMS OF THE DEAD KING. HE SAID FAISAL, WITH ALL HIS VIRTUES, CLUNG TOO TENACIOUSLY TO CERTAIN IDEAS ONCE HE HAD FORMED THEM. ZAYID SAID THAT HE HAD RELAYED TO KING IMPRESSION HE HAD GAINED FROM VISIT TO IRAQ LAST SUMMER THAT SADDAM WAS MAN WHO MIGHT BE DEALT WITH, BUT THIS WAS BRUSQUELY DISMISSED BY KING WITH COMMENT THAT IRAQI REGIME WAS ONE HUNDRED PER CENT COMMUNIST. ZAYID SAID KING UNFORTUNATELY THOUGHT EVERYBODY WAS A COMMUNIST--PDRY GOVERNMENT, IRAQIS, EVEN THE ZIONISTS. "IT WAS THE ONE THING KING FAISAL AND I DID NOT AGREE ABOUT."

5. ZAYID ALSO MADE COUPLE OF COMMENTS INDICATING THAT HE THOUGHT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BENEFIT FROM "OPENING UP" SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY. HE THOUGHT NEW RULERS MIGHT BRING THIS ABOUT.

6. SHAIKH RASHID, WHOSE "ANYTHING GOES THAT PAYS" REGIME IN DUBAI WAS PROBABLY ANATHEMA TO FAISAL'S WAHHABI INSTINCTS, SEEMED NOT DEEPLY AFFECTED BY KING'S DEATH. HE TOO THOUGHT PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY IN SAUDI ARABIA UNDER FAHD AND SULTAN WERE REASONABLY GOOD. IN INTERESTING CONTRAST TO ZAYID'S REMARK, SHAIKH RASHID SAID HIS ONLY QUALM WAS THAT NEW SAUDI RULERS MIGHT BE LESS FORTHRIGHTLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNISTS "IN THEIR FOREIGN POLICY." WE DETECTED IN THIS A NOTE OF CONCERN THAT ZAYID MIGHT MOVE TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST STATES IF HE FELT DISAPPROVAL FOR SUCH MOVE IN RIYADH WOULD NOW BE LESS ADAMANT. STERNER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ASSASSINATION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ABUDH00693
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750113-1066
From: ABU DHABI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750491/aaaadezp.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <22 AUG 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO KING FAISAL'S ASSASSINATION
TAGS: PFOR, SA, TC, (FAISAL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006